AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A license enforcement system, comprising:

a monitoring component that determines a current number (M) of users logged on to an application under a license; ~~and~~

an enforcement component that dynamically takes corrective action if M exceeds an authorized number (N) of users permitted under the license; <u>and</u>

<u>a validation component that periodically checks stored license data to ensure that the data has not been corrupted.</u>

2.   (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein corrective action includes providing a warning to one or more users.

3.   (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the corrective action comprises denying one or more users access to a license target, the license target including one of the application, a system and a device.

4.   (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a license store for securely storing license data.

5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Currently amended) The system of claim [[5]] <u>1</u>, further comprising a backup store that contains copies of stored license data.

2

7.   (Original) The system of claim 6, wherein the validation component restores corrupted stored license data by copying data in the backup store to the license store.

8.   (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising an oversight component that observes the monitoring component to ensure that it is operating.

9.   (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the oversight component restarts the monitoring component if is stops operating.

10.   (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein the oversight component shuts down the application if monitoring component cannot be restarted.

11.   (Currently Amended) A license enforcement system comprising:
      a monitoring component that monitors use of a licensed application by one or more users in accordance with a license agreement; and
      an enforcement component that takes corrective action upon notification by the monitoring component that there has been a violation of the license agreement; and
      a validation component that periodically checks stored license data to ensure that the data has not been corrupted.

12.   (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the monitoring component monitors user logins.

13.   (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the monitoring component monitors hardware associated with the execution of an application.

14.   (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the monitoring component monitors use of other applications being executed concurrently with the licensed application.

15.   (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the corrective action corresponds warning one or more users of the licensing agreement violation.

3

16.   (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the corrective action corresponds to shutting down the licensed application.

17.   (Original) The system of claim 11, further comprising an oversight component to observe the operation of the monitoring component and restart the component if it fails to operate properly.

18.   (Original) The system of claim 11, further comprising a license store for storing licenses and data associated therewith.

19.   (Cancelled)

20.   (Currently Amended) A licensing system comprising:
        a license store that receives license data from a license component associated with a licensed application;
        a validation component that periodically checks stored license data to ensure that the data has not been corrupted;
        a monitoring component that monitors license data and utilization of the application to determine license violations; and
        an enforcement component that takes corrective action in response to notification of a license violation by the monitoring component;

21.   (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the license component comprises:
        an installation component that saves license data to the license store; and
        an activation component that provides a mechanism for activating the license component, wherein license data is saved to the license store by the installation component after the license is activated.

22.   (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein license data includes a value indicative of the number of licenses provided by the license component.

4

23.   (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the license data includes license issue date and expiration date.

24.   (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the license data includes a hardware ID indicative of the hardware components of a computer system utilized to execute the licensed application and a license ID that uniquely identifies the license component.

25.   (Original) The system of claim 20, further comprising a bypass component that disables the monitoring component and/or the enforcement component.

26.   (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the bypass component is a license component with a license code within a bypass range.

27.   (Original) The system of claim 20, further comprising an interface component to facilitate information retrieval by a user.

28.   (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the interface is utilized by the enforcement component to provide notification to users in violation of a licensing agreement.

29.   (Currently Amended) A method for enforcing licensing agreements comprising:
        monitoring license data in a data store and use of a licensed application;
        determining license violations; ~~and~~
        initiating corrective action in response to detection of a license violation; <u>and</u>
        <u>checking stored license data at defined intervals to ensure that the data has not</u>
been <u>corrupted.</u>

30.   (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein determining license violations comprises comparing the number of users licensed to utilize the application against the number of users actually using the application.

31.   (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the number of users actually using an application corresponds to the number of users logged onto a system.

32.   (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein determining license violations comprises comparing the number of licenses to the number of devices, a violation occurring where the number of devices is greater than the number of licenses.

33.   (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein determining license violations comprises monitoring computer hardware configuration and comparing it with an allowable configuration specified by the licensing agreement.

34.   (Cancelled)

35.   (Currently amended) The method of claim [[34]] 29, further comprising retrieving license data from a backup store and saving it to the license store if license store data has been tampered with or corrupted.

36.   (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the license data is encrypted.

37.   (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the corrective action includes warning a user of the violation.

38.   (Original) The method of claim 29, wherein the corrective action includes denying one or more users access to the application.

39.   (Original) A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer executable instructions for carrying out the method of claim 29.

6

10/723,324   MS302986.01/MSFTP494US

40.   (Currently Amended) A method of adding licenses to a computer system comprising:

activating a license component;

installing the license component on a computer, wherein installing the license component includes storing license data in a license store; and

checking stored license data on a periodic basis to ensure that the data has not been corrupted.

41.   (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein activating a license comprises:

generating a hardware ID;

locating the license code;

transmitting the hardware ID and a license code to an activation database;

receiving an activation code from the database; and

providing the activation code to the license component.

42.   (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein license data includes a number of licenses.

43.   (Original) A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer executable instructions for carry out the method of claim 40.

7